

## Names can prove fun to remember, by George

Shakespeare wrote: "What's in a name?" But names are important. They allow us to remember people. People we loved. People we hated. People who helped us. People who put us down. People we'd rather forget, but can't. People we'd like to remember, but can't.

Try this mental exercise: Pick a name, any name, and then think of the people you can remember with that particular name. Write their name and see how much you can remember about them and your association with them. It may bring you to interesting avenues. Let us know at A Backward Glance, and we'll share it with our readers.

Take the name George.

Georges had a special place in my life. I've told you about George Gingell with whom I went to Bryant High School in Queens performing together in the dramatic club. When we auditioned for a job on "The Magic of Speech" program which was to debut on the Blue network of NBC in 1933, we both were accepted for the repertory company, along with Ralph Nelson and Jackie Gleason.

Another George that comes to mind is George D. Lottman, the dean of all New York press agents. I had been an assistant radio editor to Nick Kenny at the N.Y. Daily Mirror, when the opportunity came to me to join George Lottman's firm. He had four writers and one, Milton Josefsberg, had left to become one of Jack Benny's writers. I was offered the job, and I took it. We had to come up with ideas, and wrote stories about our clients who included: Bob Crosby and the Bob Cats, Phil Spitalny and his all-girl orchestra with Evelyn and her Magic Violin, the Astor Hotel and Roof, the International Casino, Dorothy Lamour, Ben Bernie, and many others.

One thing I remember about George D. Lottman was his propensity to drink. He had a case of Canadian Club delivered to the office every week. The most he could give away to visitors to the office was about four bottles. That meant he personally drank eight bottles a week. He never was drunk! Of course he died at the age of 42, with a burned-out stomach.

In World War II, I was sent



I Object!

to Officer Candidate School, and came out a 2nd Lieutenant. My first assignment was to the 5th Coast Artillery at Fort Wadsworth, where I reported to a Captain whose first name was George.

In 1955, I left Hollywood for San Diego, where I opened an advertising agency. My first client was Benter Brothers Chrysler-Plymouth, whose president was George Benter. This George was a great automotive man from whom I learned much. Another account was Peck Buick, whose owner was George Peck. Still another was George Webster of Pontiac/Subaru.

Then there was George Swerdlow, of the Big Wheel. During the two years my agency worked for him, his retail stores went from four to eight in San Diego, and two in Phoenix. His shrewdness and business acumen was something to behold. But it was killing trying to keep him satisfied. Although he spent \$25,000 a month, he was getting at least \$50,000 worth of work out of us. When I decided to resign the account George said: "I'll put you out of business!" I replied: "George, I was in business before I had your account, and I'll be in business without your account. (I dissolved my agency in December, 1990 ... 26 years later.)"

My first full-time teaching job at BYU in 1974 was to replace a professor; named George, who was on a year's sabbatical. He did not approve of me as his replacement, and would never tell me why. After I left the Y in 1975, he blackballed me time and again when other openings occurred. It wasn't until he retired that I returned.

The United States have had George Washington and George Bush. Yes, there have been many Georges. Georges to remember. Georges to forget. Even the time to "Let George do it!" By George.